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LUCRETIA (CHANDLER) BANCROFT.

MRS. LUCRETIA (CHANDLER) BANCROFT.

A LETTER TO HER DAUGHTER MRS. GHERARDI,

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY HORACE DAVIS.

THE letter presented to the Society herewith was written in 1828 by Mrs. Bancroft, wife of Rev. Aaron Bancroft, of Worcester, to her daughter Mrs. Donato Gherardi. Mrs. Gherardi gave it to her daughter Clara, afterwards wife of George H. Davis, and Mrs. Davis took it to California, where I copied it in 1855.

What has become of the original I do not know, but I am sure that this is a perfect transcript of it. It is worthy of a place in the Archives of the Society from its connection, direct or indirect, with so many well known persons ;[1] but to me it has a much deeper interest from the glimpses it gives of the home-life, the trials, the endurance, the patience of the women who shaped American Society in the days of the Revolution.

Mrs. Bancroft was a younger daughter of Judge John Chandler, of Worcester, whose portrait adorns the walls of our hall. He was the fourth John Chandler in lineal succession in that family, and after a career of unusual prosperity was banished for his loyalist sentiments, to which he owes the sobriquet of "Tory John," by which he was remembered in Worcester a hundred years ago.

The Chandlers were among the wealthiest and most distinguished families in the Worcester County aristocracy

[1] The history of the family is closely identified with this Society. The husband of the writer of the letter was vice-president; her son-in-law, John Davis, was president; her son, George Bancroft, was vice-president; and three of her grandsons are at this time members of the Society, J. C. Bancroft Davis, Horace Davis, and Andrew McF. Davis.

Prof. Donato Gherardi, of Italy, was a music teacher at a female College at Jackson, Louisiana, & there about 1830 married a sister of George Bancroft the Historian. They also lived at Clinton, La., & it is said that Admiral Bancroft Gherardi was born there, &

of Colonial times. Starting from the humblest beginnings, for William Chandler, of Roxbury, the progenitor, died an object of charity; his son, the first John, emigrated to Woodstock, then part of Massachusetts Colony, where he gained a firm foothold. The second John advanced considerably in position. He accumulated a comfortable property; he represented Woodstock in the General Court and served in the Indian wars with some distinction as Major and Colonel. When Worcester County was formed in 1731 he was made Probate Judge and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and he was for seven years a member of the Governor's Council.

The third John moved to Worcester, where he held pretty much every office in the County. He was Selectman, Town Treasurer, County Treasurer, Sheriff, Register of Probate, Register of Deeds, Probate Judge, Chief Justice of County Courts, Representative to the General Court, Colonel in the Militia and a member of the Governor's Council. He was also appointed by Governor Shirley, in 1754, a delegate to the proposed congress designed to concert measures for the union of the British American Colonies. He died, in 1762, wealthy and full of honors. In him the family reached its zenith.

His wife was Hannah Gardiner, great-granddaughter of Lieut. Lion Gardiner, who is one of the most picturesque figures of the early times. He was an English military engineer, sent over from Holland in 1635, by the Puritans, to construct and maintain a fort at the mouth of the Connecticut, as a check on the Manhattan Dutch. Gardiner built Fort Saybrook and commanded it till 1639, during which time he was constantly fighting, not with the Dutch, but with the Pequots. In 1639 he bought of the Indians Gardiner's Island, which lies at the east end of Long Island, whither he moved with his family. Many years later he wrote a very lively account of his four

the house in which he is said to have been born is still standing — the residence of Mrs. A. B. Payne.
1905 W. W. Boyd

years' experience at Fort Saybrook, which is still spicy reading.

In 1699, Gardiner's Island was visited by the notorious Capt. Kidd, who left in charge of the proprietor, John Gardiner, considerable merchandise and treasure, which Gardiner surrendered to the Governor of Massachusetts Bay when Kidd was arrested.

Hannah Gardiner, Chandler's wife, was born the year of Kidd's visit. Her portrait and her husband's, both by Smibert, are still in existence.

The fourth John Chandler, of whom we get a glimpse in this letter at his own fireside, smoking his pipe and petting his little daughter, succeeded his father in nearly all his public honors. He was Selectman, Town Treasurer, Town Clerk, County Treasurer, Sheriff, Judge of Probate and Representative to the General Court. He was also Colonel of the Worcester Regiment, and in 1757 saw active duty in that capacity. Chandler was married twice: first, to Dorothy Paine; second, to Mary Church. The latter was mother of Mrs. Bancroft and as such appears in this letter. Mary Church had in her veins the best of Pilgrim blood, going back even to the *Mayflower*. On her mother's side she was grandchild of Judge Nathaniel Paine, of Bristol, Judge of Probate, and of the Court of Common Pleas; also one of the Council of Massachusetts Bay. On her father's side she was granddaughter of Col. Benjamin Church, the distinguished soldier, who commanded the final expedition against King Philip; of which he left an account which is to-day the principal historical authority. Church's mother was Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Warren, one of the *Mayflower's* passengers. Church's wife was Alice, daughter of Constant Southworth, who was step-son of Governor Bradford and took an active part in public affairs at Plymouth during the first generation.

Up to 1774 Chandler's life had been one of almost unbroken prosperity, but when the storm of rebellion

against England broke out, his loyalist sentiments brought him into angry opposition to popular feeling, and he was compelled to leave home and family and retire to Boston. When Boston fell into the hands of the Continental Army, he fled to Halifax and thence to London, where he spent the rest of his life, twenty-four years. This experience gave him in Worcester the nickname of "Tory John," while in England he was called the "Honest Refugee," because of the modesty of his claims against the British Government for losses sustained by reason of his loyalty.

After his flight his estate was probated as though he were dead. Dower was set off for his wife and the remainder was confiscated. Thus Mrs. Chandler was reduced from affluence and comfort to narrow circumstances, with a large family of young children to care for. This letter recalls the harshness of the change with a touch of bitterness that was very natural.

Mrs. Chandler survived her husband's flight only seven years, and died in 1783, leaving her daughter Lucretia (afterwards Mrs. Bancroft) virtually in charge of the family, though she was only eighteen years of age. Three years later, against the wishes of her brothers, she married the Rev. Aaron Bancroft, a young clergyman, of very narrow means, just settled at Worcester. His record is so well known in this Society as to require but little detail from me. He came of good family in Reading, was graduated at Harvard College in 1778; studied for the ministry, and came to Worcester in 1784 to preach as a candidate for the pulpit of the town church. The church being Calvinistic while Mr. Bancroft leaned to Arminianism, they refused to settle him, whereupon sixty-seven men left the old church, formed what was called a poll-parish, and invited Mr. Bancroft to occupy the new pulpit on an annual salary of $500.00, which he accepted, and was duly settled in February, 1786.

The next October he married Lucretia Chandler. Young children were soon added to the family, and it became a hard struggle to provide bread for all the mouths. The salary of $500.00 was meagre enough, but even then part of it was usually paid in farm produce at the parishioners' valuation, and in many years some part of it was never paid. Mrs. Bancroft took boarders, and her husband taught private pupils in his leisure hours to eke out their slender means. She speaks of these times of mutual trial with pathetic tenderness, but never with regret.

All this was only temporary. By and by the town grew, and the parish grew and was able to give him a more adequate support. The older children were soon able to contribute something to the general fund. His "Life of Washington" brought Mr. Bancroft some income, and long before the close of life they enjoyed comparative ease and comfort.

Of their children, John, the oldest, was lost at sea. Henry, the next, died at home from injuries received on ship-board; this explains the mother's terror of the sea. The oldest daughter was Eliza, wife of John Davis, Governor and United States Senator. Their fourth son was George Bancroft, the distinguished historian and statesman. Their fourth daughter was Jane Putnam, afterwards wife of Donato Gherardi, and the recipient of this letter.

Dr. Bancroft acquired distinction in his profession, received the degree of D.D. from Harvard College, was President of the American Unitarian Association for eleven years, and Vice-President of this Society for sixteen years, beside holding other honorable positions. Of his lovely character and faithful Christian service I need not speak.

Jane Putnam Bancroft married, in 1825, Donato Gherardi, a gentleman of culture, a political refugee from Italy. In the fall of 1827 they set sail for Louisiana with

two small children who had been born to them, intending to establish a school. On receiving the news of their safe arrival at their destination, the mother's heart overflowed in the following letter:—

WORCESTER, February 28d.

It is now two days since the choicest letter which I ever received came to us. With heartfelt gratitude I gave thanks for your safety and I pray most devoutly for the blessing of health to all of you, that your husband may find his employment pleasant and you fill your duties with all the praise of a good wife and an affectionate mother. You like a good child long for a letter from mother, she a broken old woman fears she cannot collect herself sufficiently to interest you. When I reflect, my dear Jane, on my pass'd life, and of the changes and difficulties I have gone thro', I wonder I am able in this manner, to be cheerful and appear happy, but the hope which supports the just I hope will enable me to finish my course with the belief of a Christian who humbly trusts in a better life; I dont give up the joy waiting for us that we are to know each other in [the future] where all sorrow is to be [hidden] from our eyes and our enjoyment is to be without end. Many valuable writers are of this opinion, your father too joyns in it. What then is it we so much dred at parting with our friends, and separating from any we love, when duty calls? when without this very performance we cannot obtain this glorious promis. Mother must submit to loose the daughter, the daughter must be willing to leave her parents and home if the Husband of her affection requires it. To you and me my dear child it was a trial. When I took you to my arms for the last time, when I thought I should never see you more, need I describe my emotion, to know you must be lost on that Eliment and think it might be the grave of another child was certainly more than I thought I could be supported under, but that merciful providence who protects all things mercifully protected you, the waves he assuaiged, as the mother of this little family, I hope I am sensibly impressed, that you was so wonderfully preserv'd, in such danger. Sometimes I wonder how your father ever could have thought of a young girl like me

for his wife—one who was almost a child of nature—unfortunate in being bred without the least culture of the mind. My mother, a woman of a strong understanding, would often strive to turn my attention to reading and as often point out the importance of spending my time usefully; not having an early good school education, the ground work was not laid. I cair'd not for history, nor did I read much of Travels. I could form no idea where the place was nor co'ld I imagin that such people as I read of ever existed, so what was the result, I read novels to a wonderful extent, I took pleasure in a good play, and found delight in reading blank virce. Your Uncle Sever read beautifully, and he would often hear me read, which was of high consiquence but as to my knowing anything that is now consider'd an English Education I am sure it was all as out of the question. I possessed a cheerful disposition—and my mother would sometimes tell me in a plaiful manner, I should never have more at my heart than I should throw off at my heels—I was always ready for any amusement, the War we had with England did not forbid mirth, that seem'd to be the only way to go on. I was the gayest in the ball room. I never wanted more attention than I received. Sometimes my pride wd have a good lesson for I could not dress like many of my young acquaintances. Altho born in the lap of plenty, and constantly more carest than fathers generally do caress their children, when so numerous a family as he had would not expect it, but the truth was I was my mother's eleventh child, and nearly three years elapsed before the twelfth came. I was as my mother had said, a pretty little black eyed Indian, as they called me, remarked for my upright form, which gave me the name, and till the war broke out which was when I was in my ninth year, I was even then the plaything of the family, indulged by my father. He never sit in his chair without calling for 'pug' to come to him. I sat while he smoak'd his pipe. I can even now see him go and take his glass of wine, and away to his office, happy indeed were those days, the poor and the afflicted always found a reffuge in my parents, if I possess one attum of benivolence or even feal for the sorrowful, it was from these early impressions, but allas they were too short, grievous times came, my father not willing to live in altercation with those around him, a very few indeed of the number who had not by his bounty and by his kind interfearance assisted in

the daily walks of life, or aforded them such means as to enable them to get a living, it was these very men who were the most bitter, and from such men he thot it best for a while to abscond —our most confidential men laiborers was let into the seacret, and my father went to Boston, these men having all the plate, linnin and libary under their care, this was indeed afflictive, but not all —this was the work of man. My mother was to be tried more, the very next winter was the most painful, for in that winter two fine sons were drowned. You have often heard me speak of them— they were two and four years older than myself—this loss my mother moarned the rest of her days. The next summer everything was stript and torn from us. I could not see these changes and not take some lessons of usefulness. I trust they made a right impression, poverty did not come but many luxuries which my mother was accustomed to she of course must be deprived. Instead of a good cook, a second woman for chamber work, where there was at least thirteen and fifteen beds to be made a girl to tend her youngest child, and a black servant who had been train'd to the service of tending table and being altogether a house servant. All my father's linnen and my mother's nice lawns and laces kept in order by a special woman, no other than mother to old Mrs. Noar, all these were given up, even the comfort of her husbands society for he was gone. All these comforts the dreded war deprived her [of] at once except the good old black woman who was the cook, but she soon died and then a poor miserable girl was the substitute, with a little boy which my mother said she wd keep at her chair while she was at her meals. I am becoming two particular—Economy was the grand order, but my mother could not willingly give up her former appearance, her society was courted, all who had ever known her was desirous of her acquaintance, While her furnature was sold in her own house, and the very chair on which she sat, bid of from her purchase. She bore it well, and never put herself down by losing her dignity. All this was hard, but the hardest was to come. We had to loose this mother. After strugling thro these times of deep distress, the war closed, a fair prospect was before us that we should be happy, but a violent feaver overtook this frail body, she had not strength to overcome the diseas (perhaps our medical aid was not such as we are now favour'd with) death was the close—and at that time peculiarly

distressing. as her thirds were set of, as if she had no husband, and the children not considered heirs, it was expected all wd go, and we should be flung out to the wide world in this state (I was in my eighteenth year) my father in England living on a small sum annually received for the offices he left hear, the British Government were highly honorable to the sufferers—but my father possed nothing that he then could part with. Your Aunt Sever and I took the family. Your Uncles had a large family. I believe I may say I took the head. Polly, as she was called was not fond of working about house, and was often to say the least of it dissatisfyed. My brothers were desireous I should be the austensible housekeeper. All refferences were left to me in domestick concerns. I was pretty happy because I thought I certainly was earning my living. Two years your Aunt Sever and I lived there. She was then married. I could no more visit her than if I was a mother of a family. I aught to have told you, your grand mother's income we had the use of, but the principle belong'd to the State. It was thot best to send a petetion asking for it as her heirs, this was a long time in agetation. Your father had become our minister. I was pleased with him and while our affairs was in this poverty struck state, I might, or I might not be your father's wife. I had been tried in so many ways. I found there was no certainty in riches, trouble would come and it might be softened by the quiet life I might leed with a clergeman—much to the disappointment of my brothers they thought I could find some one to give me a better living, and was very desirous to have me give it up. It is not easy for a young girl to give up an object where she considers her highest happiness depends, at the same moment let me be understood I had no property nor was it known that there ever would be any. Even my mother's thirds had not been given to us, so you notice, money was not the object, if it was affection I hope I have not been deficient in my best endeavors to prove my constant desire to promote his happiness, and save his interest—it has always been my first object to see him happy—none but a parent can tell the joy he expressed on the birth of Henry—nor how happy I was when I had a half douzen children standing round me for their breakfast and supper consisting of rye bread tosted, the fragments of cold coffee boyled and put on milk. I always did it with my own hands, they as cheerful and satisfied

as if it was a dainty, for why? Because mother gave it them —at dinner my children always dined with us—cheap soup or pudding would be generally seen. Count Rumford's book was of much use to me. I learn'd many cheap dishes and made them satisfactory to my family—I was grateful for the bright prospect the children as they advanced for their readiness to learn and the very great love they show their mother. As to Henry I could do anything with him, if he could only save me any laibor he was perfectly happy. John was a wonderful boy with as good a heart as his brother—if our circumstances had not always been straightened I have no doubt it would have been his choise to have had a liberal Education but providence ordered it otherwise, nor do I think it sinning when I say I shall go sorrowing to my grave for these sons. Your father has often said Eliza caused him the least trouble of the four first children. I had no trouble with her, she was always yealding to my wish and quick to learn. I had real delight in learning her to work. You come in the next flock, never need a father and mother love a child more than we did you. Eliza took peculiar pleasure in aiding and assisting you in what we call'd important in your future wellfair. We certainly saw your character rising in excellence, nor were I deceived even in parting with you. A heighth of excelence I found in you that I delighted to see. Your husband and children supersceded all other ties, and you as a good wife and mother parted with us with a determined assureance of performing your duty in these capassities, if it is possible I love you the better for it, and with such a determination you will succeed, how earnestly I pray for you success. Let me hear from you often. Let me know all of Mr. Gherardi and the dear children and all of yourself. Be assured all shall be kept within our own bosomes. How I long at this moment to give you another adieu, the children! how I long to see them, that is impossible, you must write if you wish to make me recosiled to my loosing all of you.

Your affectionate mother,

L. Bancroft.

Eliza and boys are well. I tell her she don't look quite as well as she used to. Her soliscitude was grate for many weeks while her husband was so sick and now I judge by my own feelings if she dont hear often there is an anxiety lest he may

have a recurranc, and that will be exactly my trouble if I dont hear from you.

Lucretia is now reading Virgil for dear life, quite a wonder in that particular—her school is done—we hear daily that she has another school, some have even said she was to go to New York and take the one you was to have. how strange when no one has ever thot of such a thing, but I hope she will have one for I believe it would give her pleasure. Mrs. Greenlief Wheeler is dangerously sick with a feaver—what a family to loose its mother—Your father is in Hartford learning them to be Unitarians.

March 6th. You shall know the success of such an ambassion.

[On the back of the letter is the following]

I pronounce this letter to be invaluable. Clara, keep it as long as you live. J. P. Gherardi.

The original is followed in the copy as closely as possible.

Historical Notes on the Letter by Andrew McFarland Davis.

Such particulars as are essential for a complete understanding as to the personality of the several members of the family alluded to in the foregoing letter have been furnished by my brother, in the paper through which it was brought before this meeting. It is not my purpose, therefore, in what I have to say, to trespass any more than is absolutely necessary, upon that portion of the subject. The reference, however, in the letter to the aid derived from Count Rumford's book, and the family bill of fare there given, throw a flood of light upon the struggles of Dr. Bancroft's family in their endeavor to support life upon the meagre pittance afforded by his salary as pastor supplemented by what he could earn in extraneous work as teacher and editor, and suggest a topic which will bear some elaboration. It is true that the young married couple were not absolutely without means, but the small portion of Judge Chandler's estate, which came to Mrs. Bancroft shortly after their marriage, was not of so much

use to them through its increase of their income as it was through the fact that its possession served first as a guarantee against positive want, and in the end it was probably through this fund that they were enabled to purchase a home. The heroism of this young woman in boldly accepting the hardships of life which were plainly in view when she married Mr. Bancroft can only be appreciated by a review of the surrounding circumstances, and it is to the development of the facts necessary to accomplish this that I shall devote the greater part of the time allotted me this morning.

The first glimpse that we have of the writer of the letter is the picture in which she describes herself at the outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and the Colonies, as the "little black-eyed Indian." She was then a mere child of nine years of age, her tenth birthday happening in the week after the battle of Bunker Hill. Up to that time she had known nothing of the hardships of life, and it was far from the conception of any member of the family that the comfort or even the luxury in which they had theretofore lived could ever be invaded. Her great-grandfather, John Chandler, a resident of Woodstock, held important offices in Worcester County. Her grandfather and father, bearing the same name, residents of Worcester, held pretty much all the offices, appointive or elective, that could be conferred upon them either by royal governors or by their fellow-citizens. The income from transmitted wealth added to the salaries and perquisites of office furnished means for the maintenance of the household upon the ideal standard of the country gentleman. The portrait of Judge Chandler which hangs upon the wall of this Society was doubtless painted when he was living at ease in his family mansion in Worcester, dispensing the hospitalities for which his house was celebrated, and bestowing with free hand the charities to which his daughter alludes in her letter. Although

it depicts a man whose career up to this time had been absolutely free from care, whose happy relations with his family are shown in the repeated references in the letter to the affectionate manner in which he treated the writer, and upon whose life but few sorrows had up to this time cast their blight, still the impression derived as to the state of mind of the subject of the portrait from its contemplation is that of sadness. If the picture had been painted a few years later, one could understand this, for the time came when his loyalty to the government which had honored him converted this wealthy office-holder into a proscribed fugitive, whose right to tread on Massachusetts soil was by special legislation denied him, while his wife, if she would avail herself of the dower rights set out from his property for her support, was compelled to remain within the limits of the United States.

The writer of the letter associates the breaking up of the family circle with the close of her childish days. When next she speaks of herself the child has become a young lady and participates in the social gayeties of the little village of Central Massachusetts, which are no longer prevented by the stress of war in the immediate vicinity. She can go to balls, and partners she can have in plenty, but she feels keenly her inability to procure such dresses as many of her friends wear, and her pride revolts at the restraints put upon her. There is no hint of want in the conditions under which she is living in this second glimpse that we get of her in the letter; her father leading a lonely life in his bachelor's quarters in London,[1] sustained by the

[1] Judge Chandler was accompanied in his exile by his son Rufus, whose name like his father's was mentioned in the Act to prevent the return to this State of certain persons, *etc.*, *etc.* May 1, 1787, Rufus wrote as follows: "On the twenty fifth of July last I obtained permission from the Commissioners for my Father & myself to receive our allowance by our Agents during our absence from Great Britain for one year, and was then directed to make application for a renewal of these permissions at the expiration of that period, otherwise our allowance would cease, and as we expect to go to Annapolis in a short time," *etc.*, *etc.*—(N. E. Hist. & Gen. Reg., Vol. 24, p. 247.)

This letter was written at Halifax. The dependent condition of the father and

memory of the prattle of his children as they had in old days gathered about him in his home while he smoked his after-dinner pipe and drank his glass of wine; her mother maintaining the dignity of the household as best she could under the changed circumstances; but we can see that the expensive habits of the girl's childhood have given way to economies in dress and in the management of the household, and that there is no longer the luxury, the ease, or even the comfort to which she had formerly been accustomed.

It is perhaps worth our while as we follow the story set forth in the letter to take a glance at the legal proceedings through which the downfall of the family had been brought about. In April, 1777, there were numerous estates in Massachusetts situated as was that of Judge Chandler. The owners, loyal to the Crown, had been compelled to abandon their homes and seek protection under the British flag. It was to meet the case of these abandoned estates that the General Court, on the 19th of April, 1777, passed the "Act to prevent the waste, destruction and embezzlement of the goods or estates of such persons who have left the same, and fled to our enemies for protection; and also for payment of their just debts, out of their estates." [1]

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son being distasteful to them they had come to Halifax expecting that Rufus would be able to open a lawyer's office and earn a living. This was found to be absolutely impractieable. They still had some hope evidently that by crossing over to Annapolis an opening could be found. They both returned to London.

[1] Province Laws, Vol. V., p. 629 *et seq.* Dr. Chandler, in his genealogy of the Chandler family, furnishes what purports to be a copy of the inventory of Judge Chandler's property filed in the Probate Court by the Commissioners appointed to set aside dower. This inventory as published contains evidence in itself that the total of the estate is included as an item, dower being set off valued at exactly one-third of this item. Being of opinion that in April, 1775, the alleged date of this inventory, there was no law under which such proceedings could have been taken, I consulted Mr. Abner C. Goodell. He called my attention to what he termed "the famous ordinance forbidding the conveyance of estates of refugees," passed about a month before the Battle of Bunker Hill, as a possible basis for a mistaken reference of this sort. He also referred to the Act of May 1, 1776, directed against persons inimical to the rights of the United States, under which their property, upon conviction of the offenders, could have been forfeited to the Colony.—Ibid., p. 479 *et seq.* He was of opinion that if Dr. Chandler gave 1775 as the date of the confiscation proceedings he was mistaken. Since I wrote to Mr. Goodell, I have ascertained that the proceedings against Judge Chandler's estate were conducted under

Under this Act, the Judge of Probate for any County was authorized to appoint an agent to take charge of the estate of an absentee whose absence had been certified to him by the Selectmen or the Committees of Correspondence, Safety and Inspection of the town, provided such absence had continued for three months or upwards; provided, also, that the absentee had left property behind him and that he had voluntarily gone to the enemy. Belief on the part of the Committee was adequate for the establishment of the last fact. Any agent appointed under these circumstances was empowered to settle the estate of such absentee as an administrator would if the absent person were dead. In case persons were left behind, dependent upon the estate for support, the Judge of Probate was "impowered to allow bedding, utensils and implements of household furniture, necessary for the upholding of life, for the use of the wife & family of the absent person," and he might also "assign to the wife the use and improvement of one third part of the real estate during the absence of the husband."

Any agent who might be appointed under this Act was instructed to sell the entire personal estate which should come into his hands at public auction and out of the proceeds pay the debts of the absentee. If the personal property should not prove adequate to satisfy the demands of creditors, then the agent was to apply to some court for license to sell real estate.

Proceedings against the Chandler estate were begun on the 18th of April, 1777, under this Act, so far as this can

the Act to prevent the Waste, *etc., etc.* I am, however, equally indebted to Mr. Goodell for calling my attention to this ordinance through which the conveyance of property by refugees was inhibited. It was passed May 22, 1775, and prohibited any person within the Colony from taking "any deed, lease or conveyance whatever of lands" from the described persons. On the 21st of June, the Provincial Congress followed the matter up, by recommending the Selectmen and Committees of Correspondence of the several towns of the Colony to take the property of refugees into their care.—See Journals of the Provincial Congress. See, also, Massachusetts Archives, Vol. 138, No. 57. See, also, notes to Chapter 38, Province Laws, Vol. V., pp. 706-713. Mr. Goodell also referred me to the notes to Chapters 24, 48 and 49, Laws of 1778, 1779; Province Laws, Vol. V., pp. 1004, 1052 and 1056.

be determined by the dates of original papers now on file in the Probate Court. The Chairman of the Worcester Committee of Correspondence, *etc.*, then filed the certificate required under the first section of the Act.[1]

An agent was thereupon promptly appointed, who qualified by filing the required bond on the 7th of May, and then entered upon the performance of his duties.[2] It is evident, however, that the Committee took possession of the estate prior to the appointment of the agent, for in his final account the agent charges himself with cash received in June, 1777, from the Committee of Correspondence of the town of Worcester, and with sundry obligations delivered by the Committee, which were afterwards paid. There is no authority conferred by the "Act to prevent the waste, *etc.*," for any such action on the part of the Committee, but it is a remarkable fact that in the various proceedings against the property of the loyalists which then took place there was seldom any step taken or act committed, however harsh and arbitrary such action was, which was not to be justified by some authority conferred upon the perpetrators by the General Court. The Assembly by bestowing upon the proper authorities power to carry

[1] Worcester April 18, 1777.

To the Honorable Levi Lincoln Esq[r] Judge of Probate for the County of Worcester. The Committee of Correspondence Inspection & Safety for this Town, would inform your Honor, that agreeable to a Late Act of the Great and General Court of this State, to prevent Waste, Destruction, or Embezzlement of the Estates of those Persons who have left them & fled to the Enemy, and as by said Act Information must come to the Judge from the Selectmen or Committee of said Towns where said Estates are —— The Committee for this Town, in conformity to said Act would Inform your Honor, that John Chandler Esq[r] has absented Himself leaving a Wife & family, that James Putnam Esq[r] has absented himself with his whole family, excepting one negro man. That Rufus Chandler has absented Himself with his wife leaving one Child. That Doct[r]. William Paine has absented Himself & since sent for his wife leaving One Child—all which Persons except Mrs Paine have been absent more than three months, & said Committee verily believe have fled to the Enemy.

By order of the Committee of
Correspondence &c for Worcester
JOHN CUNNINGHAM, Chairman.

[2] The Agent was Joseph Allen, then County Clerk, and afterwards a member of Dr. Bancroft's congregation. Hon. Alfred S. Roe, in an article on George Bancroft in the "New England Magazine," calls attention to the fact that Mr. Allen performed the marriage ceremony for Dr. Bancroft and his wife.—N. E. Mag., Vol. XXIII., p. 163.

out the sequestration of the estates of the fugitives was able to protect the property from disorderly destruction and from seizure by unauthorized persons. Security was also thereby gained that provision could be made for the support of dependent members of the family. The authority for the action of the Committee at this time is probably to be found in a resolve of the General Court passed April 23, 1776, instructing the Committees of Correspondence, Safety and Inspection to take possession of the estates of absentees.[1]

Judge Chandler took refuge in Boston in the fall of the year 1774, so that there was an interval of about two years, during which the family remained in undisturbed possession of the property.[2] Possibly they managed to

[1] This subject is developed by Mr. Goodell in the note to Chapter 38, Laws of 1776–1777.—Province Laws, Vol. V., pp. 706 *et seq.*

The resolve of May 22, 1775, inhibited the transfer of property by refugees. The resolve of June 21, 1775, recommended Selectmen and Committees of Correspondence to take charge of the property of refugees. July 8, 1775, the Provincial Congress resolved, that the resolve of June 21, 1775, ought not to be construed to extend to any estates except such as were left unimproved and void of any occupant or possessor, until the refugee owner should be regularly indicted. March 23, 1776, a Committee was appointed to repair to Boston and take possession of the real and personal estate of the Mandamus Councillors, Commissioners of Customs and others, who at any time after April 19, 1775 and before March 20, 1776, had abandoned their property and fled from Boston. April 3, 1776, a resolve was passed the purpose of which was to reach the property of the persons mentioned in the last preceding resolve which had been placed in the name or the hands of others. April 19th a resolve was passed in the House, and concurred in April 23 by the Council, instructing the Committees of Correspondence, Safety and Inspection of every town and plantation in the Colony, to take possession of the estates of refugees, to lease the real estate for one year and to inventory the personal estate. It being feared that the general terms of this resolve might interfere with the Committee appointed March 23, to take possession of the estates of the Boston refugees an explanatory resolve curing this possible defect was passed May 4, with a proviso for the support out of the estates of the wives and children of the obnoxious persons.

[2] His name, which constantly occurs in the Worcester Records for many years, suddenly disappears in 1774. Its last appearance there was as a signer of the vigorous and somewhat famous protest of the loyalists, presented June 20, 1774, which Clark Chandler, one of the signers, being then Town Clerk, extended in full upon the Records. The protest was not only carefully expunged but Clark Chandler was publicly reprimanded at a town meeting for making the entry. It appears from one of the reports prepared by the Commissioners appointed to investigate the claims of American loyalists that Judge Chandler took refuge in Boston in September, 1774.—Audit Office Records, American Loyalists, Vol. 105, fol. 122; Records Office, London. He was in Boston when Gage sailed, and signed the address then presented the General.

contribute towards his support after he left Boston, until their means were curtailed by the action of the Committee of Correspondence. Following the seizure of the estate by the Committee there came a period of uncertainty and doubt, during which the hope that the Judge of Probate might be induced to assign Mrs. Chandler her thirds was never abandoned, notwithstanding the failure of the judge to exercise his power to do so. This anxiety was prolonged for nearly three years, her rights in the income of her husband's estate not being actually set off until nine months after her possible claim for consideration had been converted into an absolute right by subsequent legislation.[1]

Judge Chandler's estate was almost exclusively invested in real property in Worcester and Hampshire Counties. Some of it was unproductive, but there were many improved farms which were let out on leases. Appraisers were appointed for the Worcester property in 1777 and for the outside real estate in 1778. They were instructed to return the appraised value of the several lots in lawful money, that is to say on the basis of silver money, in the pounds, shillings and pence of the New England denomination. The returns of most of the appraisers then appointed were promptly made, and an inventory of the real estate evidently made up from them, which bears no date but was probably made in 1778, shows that they had then found real estate amounting according to the appraisement to £36,835 15*s*. The appraisers of the Worcester property were instructed to make a return of the value of the "Bedding Utensils & Implements of Household furniture," and to report the names of such of the family as were unable to support themselves.

On the 20th of November, 1778, Mary Chandler petitioned the Judge of Probate that one third part of the improvement of her husband's real estate during his absence might be assigned her under the "Act to prevent the Waste," &c. The petition was not at that time allowed.

[1] Province Laws, Vol. V., p. 971.

The "Act to prevent the return to this State of certain persons therein named and others, who have left this State or either of the United States, and joined the enemy thereof,"—in which John Chandler was mentioned by name, became a law, October 16, 1778.[1] The "Act for confiscating the estates of certain persons, commonly called Absentees" was passed May 1, 1779.[2] Under this last Act the wife of any absentee who had remained in the United States became entitled to the improvement and income of one third part of her husband's real and personal estate (after payment of debts) during her life and continuance in the United States. Judges of Probate were instructed to set off such dower, "in like manner as it might have been if her husband had died intestate within the jurisdiction of this State."

A detailed inventory of the personal property which had come into possession of the agent was returned by him, and oath made to its accuracy March 17, 1779. Accompanying this and forming a part of the same report was the return of the Commissioners appointed to estimate the value of the Worcester property. The personal property they estimated as worth £572 9s. The Worcester real and personal estate they put at £23,612 9s. An interest in a farm at Charlton they valued at £2,000, and they called the whole £25,615 9s.,—three pounds more than the separate items foot up.

March 17, 1779, Mary Chandler petitioned for the use and improvement of one third of the real estate of her husband, the conclusion of her petition being couched in the following words: "the anxiety & solicitude attending the long suspense she has been in relative to the premises are very disagreeable to her, for which as well as other reasons she is moved to make the request which if granted will be

[1] Province Laws, Vol. V., p. 912. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 968. Special authority had been given the Agent at that time to lease certain real property for one year at rent to be approved by the Selectmen of Worcester. Resolves of the General Assembly of the State of Massachusetts Bay, p. 6, April 9, 1778. Resolve XXVI.

of essential service to her, as a permanent security of the support of herself & her orphan family." The granting of the petition being at this time discretionary with the Judge of Probate, no action was then taken, but about seven months later, a little over five months after the passage of the Confiscation Act, on the 12th of October, commissioners were appointed to set off dower. These commissioners on the 6th day of December made return of their action under this appointment. They estimated the value of the real estate at £76,515,[1] the Worcester property especially being appraised by them at much higher figures than it was in the previous appraisals. They set off for dower the homestead, and certain pastures, wood lots and farms in Worcester, which with one pew in the town church, they valued at £25,505. This valuation was accepted by the Court, and both Mary Chandler and Joseph Allen, the agent, signified their assent to it. An order was therefore entered February 8, 1780, approving the return and setting off the designated real estate for the improvement of Mrs. Chandler. The final return of the agent was not made until 1784. It contains the following statement as to the disposition of the personal property. "N. B. The one half of the personal estate contained in an Inventory exhibited into the probate was delivered to the wife of said absentee by order of the Judge of Probate & the remainder was rec'd by the Committee of Confiscation for the County of Worcester."

[1] The accuracy of the estimate of the first appraisers £36,835 15s. lawful money, the equivalent of £27,626 16s. sterling, is confirmed by Chandler's estimate of losses returned to the Commissioners of American Claims, in London. He estimated the property which he was compelled to abandon, as worth, £25,000 sterling.—See Vol. 105, fol. 122, Audit Office Records, American Loyalists, Records Office, London. In the volume known as "Index to American Claims" in the same office, under the heading "Claim for loss of Propt" against the name "Chandler John Massa" the amount £11,067 13s. is given. This "claim" can not represent the value of the entire estate.

Chandler's original estimate of £25,000 was evidently a moderate and fair estimate of the value of the estate in 1774. The appraisers of the Hampshire property made a return of the value as £2,530 5s. in 1774 and 1775. This not being satisfactory to the Agent, they made a second return of the value as of Dec. 1778, at £8,695 15s. The valuation of the same property in the 1780 appraisal was £8,770.

In view of the fact that Mrs. Chandler consented to the valuation of the property which furnished the basis for the assignment of dower, it is not possible at this day to criticise the acts of the appraisers, but one thing is evident, the changes in the values assigned the various lots worked to her disadvantage, since the Worcester property was that which was most affected and it was out of this property that her dower was assigned. The homestead lot was set off to her and the additional property was certainly adequate to maintain her family in good style, if the income which it was capable of producing was proportionate to its appraised value. The only real clue that we get to this is from the letter, and there we learn that the family was obliged to economize.

The death of the mother in 1783 temporarily plunged this large family into absolute penury. The dower upon which they had lived followed the mother to the grave, and for the moment there was nothing left for the support of the family. An appeal for relief was made to the General Court, which was found to be compliant, and within about three weeks after the death of the mother, the children were authorized to take possession of and improve that part of their father's estate which had been set aside for dower. The grant was, however, not permanent in its nature, being limited by the addition of the words, "until the further order of the General Court."[1] In 1786, the Legislature in still more generous mood set over the estate from which the dower had been derived, save a single lot on what is now Lincoln Square, which had in 1785 been appropriated for a gaol for Worcester County. The title was granted in fee simple to seven of the children who were designated by their names, Lucretia being one.[2]

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[1] Resolves of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in New England, Boston, 1783, p. 47. Resolve XV., October 4, 1783.

[2] The original grant was in October, 1783. On the second of July, 1784, the Legislature ordered all confiscated estates to be sold. February eleventh, 1785, this estate was excepted from the operation of the above order and the children were author-

The days of thoughtless merry-making of this young girl were by the death of her mother brought to an abrupt ending. She was selected by her brothers to take charge of a household in which, as she says, there were fifteen beds to be made up in the morning, and here began the preparation for the responsible career which was before her. Her time was entirely occupied with the cares which were thrown upon her shoulders, and all thoughts of amusement were necessarily laid aside. Although there is nothing in the letter to indicate that she in any way rebelled at the responsibilities which were thrust upon her, this phase of her life is perhaps the most barren of all those of which we catch a glimpse. Later she endured far greater hardships, but then she had her husband with her to cheer her spirits, to sympathize with her troubles, and above all, she could triumph with him as they jointly overcame the obstacles which impeded the progress of his career. But at this time, while still young and fond of society, she found herself cut off from many of the pleasures which go to make this period the one to which girls look back in old age as the pleasantest portion of life. Still she was happy, because, as she says, "I thought I certainly was earning my living."

It is as a married woman that we next see her, and it is only through the economies which she then practised that she betrays the hardships of the life upon which she had now entered. The statement in the letter, "Count Rum-

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ized to remain in possession for two years longer. In June, 1785, Thaddeus and William Maccarty were authorized to prove claims against the estate of John Chandler, the same to be satisfied out of the dower estate. June 10, 1786, the dower estate, except the gaol-lot was set over to the seven children in fee simple, subject to the payment of all debts due from the estate and not already paid. June 23, 1786, it appearing that the form of this grant would not produce the beneficial result intended by the legislature, the resolve of June 10th was repealed and the same parties were declared to be seized and possessed in fee simple as tenants in common of the real estate set off to their mother for her thirds, with exception of the gaol-lot, "the petitioners paying and discharging all those debts due from the said estate, which have not already been examined and allowed by the Commissioners on the same, as reported to the Judge of Probate for the said County." The last claim allowed against the estate was in 1787.

ford's book was of much use to me, I learned many cheap dishes and made them satisfactory to my family," discloses a utilitarian application of the investigations into the science of nutrition made by the remarkable man to whose book she refers, which is of very great interest. It is not unlikely that the majority of those who are present at this meeting have no other associations with the name of Benjamin Thompson than those aroused by his investigations on the subject of heat, concerning which the Committee of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences which supervised the publication of his complete works in 1874, said: "his experiments are now seen to be the first of that memorable series of investigations which has resulted in the modern mechanical theory of heat and the conservation of energy."[1] This committee classified the papers in the four volumes which they then published under the following heads: "The scientific papers will be found chiefly in the first two volumes; descriptions of improved methods of warming and cooking occupy the third; and the greater part of the last is devoted to the philanthropic essays; but this also contains the scientific papers on light." It will be seen that Count Rumford's paper entitled, "Of the Construction of Kitchen Fire Places and Kitchen Utensils, together with remarks and observations relating to the various processes of cooking, and proposals for improving that most useful art," which was relegated to the third volume of the Complete Works, was not regarded by the Committee as a scientific paper, while the "investigation of the science of nutrition" which Count Rumford entitled, "Of food; and particularly of feeding the poor," a paper, doubtless, which was of use to Mrs. Bancroft, which was included by the Committee under the philanthropic essays in the fourth volume, was also discarded from the society of the papers called scientific. It is not to philanthropic essays

[1] The Complete Works of Count Rumford, Vol. IV., Boston, 1875. See Preface, pp. iv., vii.

that we should naturally turn for cooking receipts, and I confess that I should have been at a loss for a solution of the question, To what did the writer refer by this reference to Count Rumford's Works? had it not been impressed upon my memory that I had recently heard Professor Trowbridge, of Harvard University, describe at a meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the results arrived at by Count Rumford in a study made by him of the science of nutrition. In this description full justice was done by Professor Trowbridge to the scientific character of the work.

The circumstances under which this investigation was undertaken were peculiar. Bavaria was at that time overrun with what we should call to-day tramps. Count Rumford describes the situation in the following words: "The number of itinerant beggars, of both sexes and all ages, as well foreigners as natives, who strolled about the country in all directions, levying contributions from the industrious inhabitants, stealing and robbing and leading a life of indolence and the most shameless debauchery was quite incredible; and so numerous were the swarms of beggars in all the great towns, and particularly in the capital, so great their impudence and so persevering their importunity, that it was almost impossible to cross the streets without being attacked and absolutely forced to satisfy their clamorous demands. And these beggars were in general by no means such as from age or bodily infirmities were unable by their labor to earn their livelihood: but they were for the most part, stout, strong, healthy, sturdy beggars, who, lost to every sense of shame, had embraced the profession from choice, not necessity, and who not unfrequently added insolence and threats to their importunity, and extorted that from fear which they could not procure by their arts of dissimulation." [1]

The problem which Count Rumford set for himself was

[1] Works of Count Rumford, Vol. IV., pp. 241, 242, Boston, 1875.

to put a stop to this condition of things. As a preliminary step he hired a vacant building in Munich, originally erected as a manufactory, and made preparations to furnish work to such of these vagrants as were physically capable of it. Then on a given day, by means of the co-operation of the military with the police, he caused every person found begging in Bavaria to be arrested, and thus at one stroke practically put a stop to the business. "In the four years immediately succeeding the introduction of the measures adopted for putting an end to mendicity, and clearing the country of beggars, thieves, robbers, etc.," said Rumford, "above ten thousand of these vagabonds, foreigners, and natives were actually arrested and delivered over to Civil Magistrates," and "in taking up the beggars in Munich and providing for those who stood in need of public assistance, no less than twenty-six hundred of the one description and the other were entered upon the lists in one week, though the whole number of the inhabitants of the city of Munich probably does not amount to more than sixty thousand, even including the suburbs."

It was under such circumstances as these that Rumford began his great experiment in social science which resulted in temporarily, at least, suppressing beggary in Bavaria. His "Military Work-house" was at first a source of expense, but under his careful supervision it ultimately became self-supporting.

This was accomplished through the skilful manner in which the labor of the inmates was applied, and in the economies of administration which resulted from his studies of the use of fuel in cooking and his investigations of the nutritive value of different foods. His purpose was to give his working force food which should develop their strength to the best possible advantage. That was evidently the first point to be gained, and the second was to make use of those substances which would most economically accomplish this result. His investigations

not only covered these two points but also comprehended the determination of the best methods of culinary treatment. The results of this study are embodied in the paper on food, which not only contains a great deal of statistical information as to the preparation and cost of the foods used at the Military Work-house together with similar statistics obtained with reference to the food of certain soldiers in the Bavarian army, but also has a number of receipts which he recommends. He devotes a chapter to our Indian Corn and gives an "Approved Receipt for making a plain Indian Pudding." He has considerable to say "On the Boiling of Potatoes so as to be eaten as Bread," and gives a "Receipt for a very cheap Potato Dumpling" and another "for preparing boiled Potatoes with a Sauce." He has a good deal to say about the value of Barley as food and introduces it with Samp or Hominy in his Receipt for a very Cheap Soup. Rye bread is another cheap food which he recommends, and he adds a detailed account of the experiments made at the Bake-house of the Military Work-house in baking rye bread.

It was the information contained in these papers which proved of practical value to Mrs. Bancroft in her housekeeping in Worcester. If we wish fully to comprehend the extent of the economies which Count Rumford was actually dealing with we must turn to the statistics which he gives concerning his Bavarian soldiers. Their pay, he says, was five kreutzers a day and $1\frac{1}{2}$ Bavarian pounds of what he calls ammunition bread. This bread he considered to be worth three kreutzers, so that the daily pay was equivalent to eight kreutzers. He shows that the cost of feeding each soldier was $5\frac{17}{48}$ kreutzers, leaving $2\frac{31}{48}$ kreutzers for beer, tobacco, *etc.* He reckoned that the daily expense of feeding the Bavarian soldier was "equal to two pence sterling, very nearly." Notwithstanding the fact that some of the ingredients of these cheap receipts

were native and nearly all were capable of being produced in New England, it may be doubted whether similar economies could have been practised in a household there. It is obvious, however, that much profit was gained by this sagacious woman through the perusal of Rumford's works. Edward Atkinson, who has devoted much attention to the subject of food economies, finds that in our day the poor do not care to practise the economies which he recommends. "I shall think myself very fortunate," says Rumford, "if what I have done in the prosecution of these my favorite studies should induce ingenious men to turn their attention to the investigation of a science hitherto much neglected, and where every new improvement must tend directly and powerfully to increase the comforts and enjoyments of mankind." Rumford's work, in which he took such pride, was of unquestioned merit, yet so far from its stimulating ingenious men to further researches in the same direction, the subject has been since practically neglected until it was taken up by Atkinson in our day,[1] and the valuable monographs of Rumford, full of food and fuel statistics as they are, are concealed in the new edition of his works among the philanthropic essays.

One contemporaneous admirer we know that he had in New England, the wife of a country clergyman, struggling to live and rear a large family upon an inadequate salary, and we may be sure that she meant what she said when she wrote "Count Rumford's book was of much use to me."

The glimpse that we get of the life of this struggling family through the pictures that she gives of the table around which the children of the family gathered to consume their rations of rye bread, to drink their share of the fragments of cold coffee boiled and to sip their

[1] I am not unmindful in making this statement that at the present time investigations are being carried on in some of our laboratories of a highly scientific character which promise results of great value in regard to the nutritive values of foods.

cheap soup and eat their cheap pudding, is supplemented by further details of an autobiographical character furnished by the father of the family in his fiftieth anniversary sermon.[1] At a town meeting held on March 1, 1785, the question being submitted whether the town would agree to settle Mr. Bancroft in the work of the Gospel ministry, it was voted in the negative. At the same meeting it was also voted not to give the consent of the town to the formation of a new religious society by those who were desirous of settling Mr. Bancroft. Thereupon those who favored Mr. Bancroft seceded from the first parish and formed an association for the purpose of creating another religious society in Worcester. Over this second congregational church Mr. Bancroft was ordained February 1st, 1786. "The time was unfavorable," says he, "when these proceedings commenced. The revolutionary war had then closed and paper money no longer passed as currency, every production of the earth had greatly fallen in price, state taxes were high, and creditors demanded their debts. People in consequence felt themselves oppressed, and in 1786 Shays' insurrection broke out. The new Society being an individual association and not incorporated, were still holden by the first parish; they asked to be exempted from a ministerial tax, but were denied. In October, 1786, I married, and of course met the expenses of a family. The salary was $500. Under the complicated difficulties of the period this was considered a weight too onerous to be borne." It was under circumstances like these that the young couple entered upon their married life, dependent, for a time at least, for their support, upon a small salary, the collection of which in its entirety it was found to be almost impossible to accomplish. "To assess the annual salary, or enforce the collection, in

[1] A sermon delivered in Worcester January 31, 1836, by Aaron Bancroft, D.D., *etc., etc.* Worcester, 1836.

the usual manner," says William Lincoln, "was impracticable." Resort was, therefore, had to monthly contributions for the support of the minister, and the amounts due from individuals were afterwards adjusted.

If we consider the conditions of life under which this young woman had spent her childhood, we cannot wonder at the disappointment of her brothers at the marriage of their sister to a young clergyman settled over a mere association of individuals, from whom there was no legal method of forcing the voluntary subscriptions they had made to the inadequate salary agreed upon. Mrs. Bancroft had, however, made her choice and she entered upon the struggle for life with all the energy with which nature had endowed her. "Rarely has a woman," says Dr. Bancroft, "from a family of plenty so readily conformed to a change of worldly condition, so cheerfully sustained the straitened circumstances of a family, or so perseveringly and effectually labored for its support, as she has done."

Insignificant as was the salary which he received, Dr. Bancroft realized that his parish could not pay it and simultaneously erect a house for public worship. Consequently, in March, 1789, he voluntarily surrendered one-third of his salary on condition that a meeting-house be immediately built. After the completion of the new building affairs moved more smoothly but, at best, it was quite impossible to support his growing family on his salary as clergyman. "My income from the parish," he says, "being quite inadequate to the support of a family, I was obliged to have recourse to extraneous means. We for years received as many boarders as our house would accommodate. I assisted several youth in their preparation for college, or qualifying themselves for useful stations in busy life; through a long period I admitted in the forenoon of week-days a number of the daughters and relations of my parishioners into my study and gave them the best instruc-

tion in my power. The publication of Washington's Life yielded some profit; during several years I officiated as editor of one or another of our public journals."

During the Napoleonic wars there was such a rise in the necessaries of life that Dr. Bancroft could no longer meet the current expenses of his family. He says: "In a conference with assembled members of the society this fact was declared, and they were informed that I had encroached on the small capital bequeathed [1] to my wife by her father. The appeal was not made in vain. Individuals were liberal in sending to our house articles of consumption and in the seven following years I received by special grants, in addition to the annual salary, nine hundred dollars. In 1816, three hundred dollars was added to the salary, which was continued till the settlement of a colleague, when at my instance the salary was reduced to five hundred dollars, the original amount." Thirteen children had in the meantime been born in this household. The older boys had gone to sea, but the older daughters, competent, energetic and brought up under the influence of this respected father and beloved mother, bore their share in the household labors, provided as they best could for the comfort of the father and relieved their mother in the care of the younger children. The much needed increase in the salary did not come until a radical change had taken place in Dr. Bancroft's public position. From a solitary, ostracized preacher, who during the first seven

[1] The use of the word bequeathed is probably inadvertent on the part of Dr. Bancroft. The frequent occurrence of the doctor's name in the Indexes of the Registry of Deeds in Worcester indicates the manner in which he invested his wife's property. He first figures as grantee of land in Ward in 1788, the consideration being £300. The next year he and his wife, in consideration of £350, convey to Samuel and Charles Chandler all the right, title and interest which they have in and to several messuages, tracts and parcels of land lying in Worcester aforesaid, with the buildings thereon standing and the appurtenances thereunto belonging, being the same which by a resolve of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts bearing date the twenty-third day of June, A. Domini one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, were granted to the said Lucretia with others therein named as tenants in common of the premises above described. This last is the dower property.

years of his ministry found only three clergymen in the vicinity of Worcester who would exchange with him, he had become a recognized leader and had laid the foundation of that reputation which made him the president of the American Unitarian Association from 1825, the date of its organization, down to 1836; which had already brought him the degree of D.D. from Harvard; which led the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to elect him as a Fellow, and which caused this Society to choose him for its vice-president from 1816 to 1832. With this recognition of his true place in the ministry came the accompanying burden thereby imposed upon him of receiving in his household and entertaining strangers and friends who sought his company. Dr. Hill, recognizing the full extent of this burden, tells us how it was met by Mrs. Bancroft: "In the sanctuary of her own dwelling, in rearing and educating a numerous family of children, large portions of her life were spent. But in every portion, her house was the abode of hospitality—of the enlarged and generous hospitality of a former generation. In the spirit of the Apostle she was careful to entertain strangers and was given to hospitality; and when I reflect how generously that of clergymen in former days was taxed, especially in a central place like this — how many from season to season thronged her dwelling — how incessantly she was called upon to sustain the rites of the Christian family—I cannot but admire the energy which supported her, and the cheerfulness with which she performed a high duty. Whatever sacrifices of time and labor it might cost, night or day, her doors were thrown widely open, and the friend or relative, the stranger or sojourner, found a warm welcome at her fireside and her board."[1]

Dr. Allen, of Northborough, himself a recipient of the hospitality of Dr. Bancroft, says: "It was my good

[1] A Discourse on the Life and Character of the Rev. Aaron Bancroft, D.D., by Alonzo Hill, Worcester, 1839.

fortune to be an inmate in his family for several weeks in the summer of 1815, when I had opportunity to witness, in the order and peace and mutual love that prevailed, evidence of the wisdom and skill with which it had been presided over by its venerated head, then absent on a distant journey."[1] One story that Dr. Allen relates calls vividly to our minds the great changes that have been produced by the economics of to-day in the publication of books, and the social changes wrought by our numerous libraries which bring literature of all sorts within reach of the poorest household. "Guy Mannering" was then first out, the authorship being still unknown, and a copy had been received at Dr. Bancroft's. "Our afternoons," says Dr. Allen, "were mostly spent in the parlor, where the members of the family, with occasionally some of the neighbors used to assemble to listen to the reading" of the new book.

Through the same source, we gain some aid in estimating the esteem in which Dr. Bancroft was held by the community at large and by visitors at Worcester, and we learn something about the way in which the family spent their evenings. "His house," said Dr. Allen, "was the resort of distinguished strangers who visited Worcester, and while the courts were in session, he seldom failed to receive calls from the judges and leading members of the bar. On such occasions, subjects of deep interest and moment were sometimes discussed, to the elucidation of which Dr. Bancroft contributed his full share. However distinguished his guests, he was always listened to with deference and respectful attention, for his remarks were replete with wisdom and learning, with moderation and candor and practical good sense." * * * "On Sunday evenings, he was commonly visited by a few of his more intimate friends and parishioners, who took this

[1] "The Worcester Association and its Antecedents, *etc.*," by Joseph Allen, Boston, 1868, p. 132 *et seq.*

method of showing their respect for their venerable pastor, with whom some of them had been intimately associated through near the whole period of his ministry." * * * "The evenings thus spent were truly *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, spiritual feasts, with which our souls were refreshed; and, I trust, our hearts made better."

With this description at the hands of Dr. Allen of the life led by this worthy couple in the little house on Main Street,[1] we can appropriately close our study of Mrs. Bancroft's career, induced by the perusal of her letter. Such in substance, was the life led by the family at the time when the letter was written. While the great battle for the right of independent congregational worship had been fought by Dr. Bancroft, the second parish fully realized that his success had cost the partner of his life many sacrifices and that the victory was only gained at the expense of much suffering on her part. The parish, therefore, caused to be cut upon the same block of marble on which they bore testimony to the honor and gratitude which they felt for their pastor, their desire that "Her ardent friendship, her active benevolence, her many virtues and her efforts and sacrifices for the welfare of the Second Parish in Worcester should ever be held in grateful remembrance."

NOTE.

While the thoughts suggested by the letter find a natural conclusion with the death of the writer, it may be permitted perhaps to add one or two extracts from the numerous eulogies published at the time of the death of that daughter of whom the mother said "Your father has often said Eliza caused him the least trouble of the four first children. I had no trouble with her, she was always yielding to my wish to learn. I had real delight in learning her to work." Her death occurred in 1872, while the memory of the recent war was still fresh in the minds of people,

[1] This property was acquired by Dr. Bancroft in 1813 by two deeds. One from William Rice, consideration $750, and one from Isaiah Thomas, consideration $1,500.

and while it was still remembered how full she was of patriotic devotion to the cause of the Union and how great had been her activity in the various efforts put forth by women at that time in behalf of the troops in the field.

The *Spy* of January 25, 1872, contains an article upon her death which although signed B. was assigned the position of the leader on the editorial page. It bears evidence, I think, of being from the pen of Governor Bullock. The writer, after alluding to her husband, says: "Every community pays the tribute of eulogy to such as it terms its first man and foremost citizen; but it is even better for the moral and the lesson that the honors of every community should be accorded to its first and foremost woman." The writer then goes on to point out the many attractive features of her character which made her prominent, and in describing her life at Washington says "Mrs. Davis was much of the time at Washington during the senatorial terms of her husband, where her qualities won warm and universal favor." . . . "Among all the scenes of historical interest of that period, Mr. Clay was alike in the Senate and the drawing-room the recognized chief and favorite. It was he who said that, all things considered, Mrs. Davis was the foremost woman at Washington."

A communication signed H. (probably Mr. Haven), appeared in the editorial columns of the *Evening Gazette* of January 24, the day of her death. The writer speaks of her as "gifted beyond most women with a keen and vigorous intellect," alludes to her "energetic and active leadership in benevolent and useful enterprises" and says that "her social influence at Washington and the respect inspired by her attractive manners and brilliant conversational powers among statesmen and men of letters are well understood."

A writer who trusts that he is "not too late to add another to the many heartfelt tributes which the death of this admirable woman has already called forth," dwells upon "the enthusiasm of youth" which kept her vivacious in her old age. "Ranked among the prominent women at the National Capital full thirty years ago," he says, "she returned to Washington during the last two winters to find herself the centre of admiring regard."

The following lines, suggested by a miniature of the writer of the letter, were addressed to "Lucretia Bancroft" by her grandson, George H. Davis :—

Dreamily will fancy slip,
As one backward turns a look,
Calling up that smiling lip
And that cheerful look;
Eyes that sparkled through the tears
Of so nearly fourscore years.

Had I not this semblance now
I could see thee even yet.
Time, who slightly touched that brow
And those locks of jet,
Played in vain the spoiler's part
Heaping cares upon that heart.

I, a boy, saw thee in years,
Saw thy many merry ways,
Thought thy life knew naught of tears,
Had no cloudy days.
Careless fellow not to see
Whence the spring of youth in thee!

As a streamlet which the rain
Soils, perhaps a little while,
Grows, in flowing, clear again,
So returned thy smile.
So did thy unselfish grief
Find in active care relief.

Zealous in thy charity,
Perfect Mother, thou, at home,
Strong in him who walked with thee
Even to the tomb.
Passing first its portal dim
With that smile to welcome him.

March 21st, 1862.

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